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Message Text

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14
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-04 NSC-05 SS-15 /052 W
---------- 015219
R 080850Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5054
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
USINT BAGHDAD

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR, XF, IR
SUBJ: ARAB COUNTRIES AND PERSIAN GULF TERMINOLOGY

1. AFTER RECEIVING NEWS THAT SEVEN ARAB COUNTRIES PLANNED TO SET UP REGIONAL PRESS BUREAU IN BAHRAIN CALLED "ARABIAN GULF NEWS AGENCY," FONMIN KHALATBARY CALLED PRESS CONFERENCE JANUARY 7 AND ANNOUNCED THAT IF STORY WAS TRUE IRAN WOULD CONSIDER IT UNFRIENDLY ACT WHICH WOULD REQUIRE"RECONSIDERATION OF ALL ASPECTS OF RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES INVOLVED." KHALATBARY SAID GOI AMBASSADORS TO BAHRAIN, IRAQ, KUWAIT, SAUDI ARABIA, OMAN, QATAR, AND U.A.E. HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO FIND OUT FROM HIGH AUTHORITIES IN HOST COUNTRIES WHETHER FACTS ARE AS REPORTED, AND IF SO, WHAT HOST GOVERNMENTS' REASONS AND INTENTIONS ARE IN USING OF "UNACCEPTABLE AND HISTORICALLY INCORRECT" NAME FOR PERSIAN GULF. GOI AMBASSADORS ARE TO RETRUN TO THERAN WITH CLARIFICATION BEFORE JANUARY 20 WHEN WORKING COMMITTEE OF PROPOSED NEWS AGENCY IS SCHEDULED TO MEET IN BAHRAIN. KHALATBARY EXPRESSED HOPE THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF COUNTIRES INVOLVED HAD MISTAKENLY ACTED WITHOUT OFFICIAL
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AUTHORIZATION AND THAT THEIR GOVERNMENTS WOULD REVIEW

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SITUATION BEFORE JAN. 20.

2. MFA HEAD OF PERSIAN GULF AFFAIRS IZADI TOLD POLCOUNS PRESS ACCOUNTS OF KHALATBARY'S STATEMENTS WERE ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE BUT DENIED THAT RETURN OF GOI AMBASSADORS TO TEHRAN SHOULD BE CONSIDERED "RECALL" AS SOME PAPERS HAD IT. RATHER AMBASSADORS WERE BEING ASKED TO CLARIFY SITUATION AND MAKE PERSONAL REPORT TO GOI. IZADI SAID HE HAD HEARD FROM UNIDENTIFIED ARAB DIPLOMAT THAT TERM "ARABIAN GULF" WAS NOT ACTUALLY TO BE USED IN TITLE OF NEW REGINAL PRESS AGENCY . IZADI HOPED THIS WAS TRUE BUT NOTED THAT EVEN BLANDER DESIGNATION LF "GULF" IS ALSO UNACCEPTABLE TO IRAN WHICH INSISTS THAT PROPER HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL NAME BE RETAINED.

3. COMMENT: WHILE TO WESTERN OVSERVERS GOI RESPONSE APPEARS TO BE OVERRACTION, GULF NOMENCLATURE IS HIGHLY EMOTIONAL QUESTION WITH IRANIANS FROM SHAH ON DOWN. USE OF TERM "ARABIAN GULF" HAS SOURED IRANIAN RELATIONS WITH ARABS FREQUENTLY IN PAST, MOSY RECENTLY WITH UAE AND TUNISIA.
HELMS

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